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MEMOIR

OF

RICHARD MARVIN STRONG,

A

MEMBER OF THE ALBANY BAR,

AND

Adjutant of the 177th Regiment, N. Y. Volunteers,

WHO

DIED AT BONNET CARRÉ, LA.,

MAY 12, 1863.

PUBLISHED IN PURSUANCE OF A RESOLUTION OF THE BAR
OF THE CITY OF ALBANY.

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MEMOIR.

It is due to community, to perpetuate the memory of those who well perform their part, as an example to others after them. The life of Adjutant Strong presents a rare example of excellence and usefulness.

Richard Marvin Strong was the second son of Anthony M. and Sarah M. Strong. He was born in the city of Albany, June the 10th, 1835, and died in the military service of the United States, at Bonnet Carré, La., May the 12th, 1863.

He received the elements of his education at the Albany Academy, which he entered at an early age, while it was yet under the supervision of the late Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, and remaining there during the succeeding administration of Dr. William H. Campbell, and for a short time under Prof. G. H. Cook.

When in 1851 Dr. Campbell resigned his charge in Albany, Richard had made most valuable progress in his academic course, and was nearly fitted for college. Few

connected with the Academy at that time will fail to remember the class of young men, well advanced in study—the senior class of the school—which the Doctor had gathered under his especial care, and particularly instructed in the classics and belles lettres. Undoubtedly the instruction thus received by those young men, who daily went before their principal with unfeigned alacrity, and with the esteem and affection of children towards a father, exerted an important influence upon their moral, as well as their intellectual characters. Certain it is that there is not an instance in which the subsequent life of any member of the class has put to the blush its moral training. Its majority are still reaping the earthly benefit of its admirable discipline, and delight to recall its pleasant associations. As a member of that class, Richard's standing was second to none. The impressions he then received, and the habits then formed, partially furnish the explanation of his remarkably pure and upright life, and of the accuracy, industry and thoroughness which distinguished him in all his relations.

In 1851, he received from the Academy for his proficiency in mathematics, the Caldwell gold medal, and at the same time his friend and companion, Charles Boyd, received the Van Rensselaer classical medal. These rewards of scholarship, were presented by the principal (Dr. Campbell) at the anniversary exhibition with evident pride and satisfaction. "These young gentlemen," said

he, as they stood before him on the stage, "have never given me a moment's uneasiness throughout all their academic course." They both entered the junior class, at the college of New Jersey at Princeton, in 1852, and as they had graduated from the preparatory school with the highest honors, so they took at once the rank of the first scholars in their class. They became members of the same literary society, were room-mates together, and in 1854 graduated together; the one pronouncing the valedictory, the other the mathematical oration, the first and third honors of a large and intelligent class. Charles Boyd had early become a professor of religion, and devoted himself to the study of theology; his assiduity in study, and his constant attendance upon self-imposed labors of a charitable and educational nature, exhausted a physical constitution not naturally strong, and he died at the early age of twenty-one years, not having completed his course at the seminary.

As a student Mr. Strong endeared himself to his classmates by his companionable and social qualities, as well as won their admiration by his ability as a scholar. Prof. Stephen Alexander, of Princeton College, says of him, in a recent letter:

"He greatly distinguished himself by his attainments in scholarship while a member of this institution. The college records exhibit his final standing (at his graduation) to have been third in his large class, and within the

veriest fraction of the second position. Those who knew his previous history as an academy boy, will not be surprised to learn that the honorary oration assigned to him was the *mathematical.* Of his unexceptionable conduct and his kind and genial manners, I have still a lively recollection."

During his senior vacation he was invited by Prof. Alexander, who was acting in connection with a large committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to accompany him to Ogdensburgh as an assistant in an observation of the annular eclipse of the sun in May, 1854, and accompanied him together with Mr. William J. Gibson to assist in those important observations. Prof. Alexander in his report says:

"I was assisted in my observations by two of my former pupils in the College of New Jersey, Messrs. William J. Gibson and Richard M. Strong, both of Albany, N. Y. Their presence with me, was not only a matter of sincere personal gratification, but was important also, as we were together enabled to note some phenomena which might otherwise have escaped me, and they by their aid contributed not a little to the accurate observation of those which I might have noted if alone."

A single incident of the college life of Adj. Strong will serve to illustrate the force and fearlessness of his character even at that early age. He had been one of the founders of the Kappa Alpha, a secret society in the col-

lege, and besides having a strong attachment for the society itself, and for its individual members — an attachment which lasted throughout his life — he had been an applicant to existing chapters in other colleges for authority to establish a branch at Princeton, and he felt in a measure responsible for its success and prosperity. The faculty had concluded to suppress the secret societies, and, among others, Richard Strong was summoned before the President to sign a pledge not to attend the meetings of any such society, and to dissolve his connection therewith, so long as he remained a member of the institution. He replied substantially to the demand, that his obligations to his society were contracted when there was nothing in the college rules preventing him from assuming them, and that the standing and reputation of its members were ample proof of its harmlessness. He begged the President not to insist upon that which he should be obliged to refuse, and declared that greatly as he deprecated the consequences, he should prefer rather to suffer them than commit himself to such a pledge. A further interview was appointed with him at an unspecified future time, and the fact that he was not afterwards called upon to sever his connection with the society, or to sign the pledge proposed, shows the appreciation in which the worthy President of the college held the character of the young man who preferred rather to suffer detriment to himself than prove false to a trust confided to his care.

Though he had few superiors as a classical scholar, Mr. Strong was naturally inclined to the study of mathematics, and the natural sciences, and his early preferences were towards those pursuits as a profession. At one time he had determined to become a civil engineer, but though his constitution could not be called feeble, he was led to abandon this choice from a belief that it was not sufficiently robust, to endure the hardships and exposures sometimes attendant upon that mode of life. His next choice was the law, and soon after leaving college he entered the office of Reynolds, Cochrane & Reynolds in Albany, and became at the same time a student of the law department of the Albany University. He brought to the study a mind naturally excellent, improved by careful training. He pursued his studies with diligence, and the results were satisfactory to himself and to his instructors, giving promise of usefulness and distinction in after life. His studies were interrupted for several months which he passed in visiting Europe, traveling in Great Britain and on the continent, and resumed again on his return. In 1856 he was admitted to the Bar. His connection through relatives with important mercantile interests in Albany, threw him at once into practice, and his zeal and ability soon gained for him an extensive business. About a year after his admission to the Bar, he formed a partnership with Frederick Townsend, now major of the 18th U. S. Infantry, and William A. Jackson, afterwards colonel of the 18th regiment N. Y.

volunteers, now deceased, and upon the dissolution of the firm by the withdrawal of those gentlemen to positions in the service of the government, he became associated with Mr. George L. Stedman, with whom he was connected in business at the time of his decease. The firm of Stedman & Strong having succeeded to the extensive business of the firm of Shepard & Bancroft—Mr. Strong was enjoying the emoluments of a handsome practice when he gave his services to his country. His ability as a lawyer was marked and decided. He was accurate in his conclusions, and rapid in reaching them. He analyzed facts with thoroughness, and arranged them with method. His counsel was clear and reliable. It was always the deliberate conviction of his judgment after careful investigation of the facts, and was often sought and followed in preference to that of others of longer standing in the profession. He presented an argument to the court with a terseness, completeness and ingenuity which always commanded attention. With the members of the Albany Bar he was a general favorite, as he was among all who knew him. Fond of social enjoyments, cultivated and interesting in conversation, he was welcome everywhere, and often gave himself to the social gatherings of the city. As a companion and friend he was true and unselfish. He was cordial with all, and where his affections were enlisted, he was warm and enthusiastic. In countenance he was genial and joyous, but there was an earnestness in

his expression as in his manner which was the index of his character.

Mr. Strong's professional career was varied by attention to other interests of a more public character. He possessed an activity of mind, and a readiness of perception and execution which enabled him to attend faithfully and successfully to numerous diverse matters without neglecting his professional duties. His industry was remarkable. He wasted no time, and it was surprising to see one so young, so zealous and so constantly employed. In the truest sense of the term he was public-spirited, not from ostentation, but from love of well doing and natural energy of disposition. He was connected with many important enterprises in his native city, and the assurance that he was actively engaged in any project was almost a guaranty of its success.

Not long after the commencement of his professional life, he became a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Albany, Rev. Dr. John N. Campbell's. He was a faithful, earnest and exemplary Christian, ever mindful of the obligations of his religious profession, and living the life of one whose actions were prompted and guided by the purest faith. When the project of erecting a new Presbyterian church on State street, in Albany, was canvassed among the members of his denomination, he entered warmly into it and became a leading spirit in its accomplishment. In November, 1859, he became one of a com-

mittee of fifteen appointed from the different Presbyterian Churches of the city to carry forward the enterprise, and afterwards secretary of the committee. Under his legal counsel and conduct the church was incorporated, the land was purchased, the edifice erected and the pulpit supplied. In each step he not only performed his part as a lawyer but as an enthusiastic lover of the work, and with a refined taste and excellent judgment gave valuable advice in the manner and economy of construction, and rendered efficient services in the accumulation and management of the funds. He was made a trustee of the church and remained one until the time of his death. He entered the Sunday school, taking charge of an important class of advanced scholars, composed of two classes which he had previously instructed, every Sunday, and which showed its confidence in its instructor by volunteering unanimously in his regiment and going with him to the war. The committee to whose management this church enterprise was given, threw the legal responsibility of the proceedings entirely upon his shoulders. With characteristic energy he entered into the law of the subject and in a few weeks had at his command not only the statute law applicable, but its sources and history. It was afterwards suggested to him that a volume on the subject would have both a historic and practical interest, and he was urged to undertake its compilation and is supposed to have had it in contemplation.

The rebellion of 1861 made hurried calls upon the time

and services of the efficient young men of the North. The Albany Barracks were placed under the command of Brigadier General John F. Rathbone. Mr. Strong was then his aid-de-camp, and took an important part in organizing the regiments formed there. These barracks were the rendezvous of thousands of volunteer recruits, who came without discipline, without organization and utterly unaccustomed to the rigor and restraints of camp life. There were frequently at one time from four to five thousand, and the position of aid was no sinecure. Mr. Strong was not unequal to the task; he had had military experience as a member of the Albany Burgesses Corps and the Albany Zouave Cadets, and in those model organizations had become proficient in the drill of the company;—he soon acquired the experience of a general officer. When Gen. Rathbone was relieved of his command at the barracks, Mr. Strong received the appointment on his staff of Judge Advocate of the 9th Brigade N. Y. National Guard. His duties at the barracks ceased with the departure of the troops for the field, and, the general government having, as it was supposed, sufficient for its purposes, he returned to the practice of his profession—impressed, however, as he stated, with a sense of obligation to the country, and a determination to give his services, should the occasion seem to make a demand upon them. On the organization of the 177th Regiment N. Y. Volunteers, formerly the 10th Regiment National Guard of the State,

he accepted the laborious position of Adjutant, and turned his attention, with his accustomed energy, to placing it on a war footing. On the eve of departure, he addressed the regiment, publicly congratulating the officers and men upon their unwearied and at length successful efforts to organize for the war. They left Albany in December, 1862, with the "Banks expedition," landed at New Orleans, and were thence sent to Bonnet Carré, La., an important post on the Mississippi River, being one of the main defences of New Orleans. Large numbers of the unacclimated men of the 177th were soon prostrated with diseases peculiar to the country and to camp life; and Adjutant Strong, besides being the acknowledged friend of the individual members of the regiment, became an unwearied attendant upon the wants of the sick. His assistance was freely bestowed on all sides, regardless of danger from infection and the strain upon his strength. With a rare skill and a joyous and genial manner peculiar to himself, he watched with and assisted in the care of the sick, and administered to the dying the consolations of that religion he had himself experienced. His labors in this respect, while attending punctiliously to the duties of his position, rendered him liable through loss of strength to take the fever to which he has fallen a victim. In a letter from Bonnet Carré, written on the day after his death, full of tenderness and affection, addressed to the father of Adjutant Strong, Dr. O. H. Young, assistant surgeon of the regiment, says:

"The tenderness of his heart and his unresting desire for usefulness prompted him to visit the hospital often, in the hope of adding to the welfare of the sick soldier, and many will remember the kind solicitude which made him their constant visitor, and the cheerful words which infused new hope into their drooping spirits. Indeed, the frequency with which Richard made these visits had more than once attracted our attention, and creating some solicitude for his health had made it incumbent on us as medical officers to advise him not to spend too much time among the sick and dying. * * * * * * On Sunday, April 26, he and I sat together on a bench in front of my tent, listening to divine service. * * * * * Directly after these exercises he complained of headache, and asked me for professional advice, which was given, on condition that he immediately abandon all official duties which rendered exposure to the sun's heat necessary.

This headache spoken of by Dr. Young was the approach of the fever, which soon assumed a typhoid form, and terminated his life. In speaking of his last sickness, Dr. Young informed his parents that it was not attended with physical pain. During his last moments his physical prostration was too great to permit his articulating, but his response to the question whether he desired to be remembered to his father and family at home, was audible and intelligent. He answered, said Dr. Young, distinctly

"Yes," and a few moments after, with his brother's name upon his lips, expired. His remains were encased in a metallic coffin, and deposited in Greenwood Cemetery at New Orleans, to await their conveyance to Albany.

Thus has another valuable life surrendered itself a voluntary offering to the institutions of our country, freely given in the morning of usefulness, with bright promises for the future unfulfilled. The misgivings as to his physical endurance, which in earlier years had swerved him from the pursuits of the studies which he loved, had no power to influence his action when he felt his services were valuable to the country, but he freely gave himself to the risks of the field of battle, and the exposures of camp life, and in doing so, none who knew him will say, he was otherwise actuated, than by a sense of duty, and a desire to be of service to his country, in whose institutions he had an unshaken faith. To that faith he has borne testimony with the seal of his life — a life full of the brightest promise and endeared to him by the tenderest family affections, and throughout which, with all the opportunities and successes which attended him, there is not one moment over which his friends would desire to draw a veil. The memory of his chaste and noble nature, like the lingering rays of the setting sun, remains to soften the gloom his death has caused, and is the assurance of a triumphant future. Sweetly he sleeps the sleep of death among those,

"Qui fuerunt, sed nunc ad astra."

Proceedings of the Albany Bar.

At a meeting of the Albany Bar, convened in the Mayor's Court Room, in the City Hall of Albany, to take action regarding the death of Adjutant Richard M. Strong, on motion of Mr. C. M. Jenkins, Mr. J. I. Werner was called to the chair. On motion of Mr. J. B. Sturtevant, Mr. William Lansing was appointed secretary.

On motion, the chair appointed the following committee on resolutions: Messrs. William A. Young, John C. McClure, Hamilton Harris, J. Howard King, and George Wolford.

Hon. John H. Reynolds then addressed the meeting as follows:

One by one, and in rapid succession, those who for a time travel with us on the highway of life, drop down and are seen no more. At short intervals of time, some, that we have known and who have in some sort been our associates, disappear, and we know them no longer. At a little greater interval, those with whom we have been more intimate, fall by the way side, and then we pause a

moment and perhaps shed a few tears, and pass on, intent only upon reaching the end of our own travels and a season of repose which never comes. We find but little time to linger beside those who falter, and less, to stand around the graves of the fallen. As we move onward, at intervals which seem to grow less and less in duration, we are compelled to pause, from time to time, for the reason that our most intimate associates can no longer keep us company, but leave us to continue our progress as best we may. It is then that we tarry a little longer, and feel it a duty to give some expression to our regret and regard. We have met to day, to perform this duty, in respect to one of our professional brethren who, under circumstances of painful interest, has, in the very morning of life, left us forever. It is not long since, that under like circumstances, we were assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to the memory of another of our brethren, who in obedience to the call of his country, left home and friends, and wore out his life, in defence of the flag, which an army of traitors seek to trample in the dust. And now, after a little while, we meet again, to pay a like tribute of regard to one of gentle nature and of high promise, who more recently gave up the pursuits of an honorable profession, and severed the tenderest ties that bind our common humanity, to brave all the privations and dangers that attend the patriotic citizen and soldier, who takes up arms in defence of the insulted flag of his country. It is

fitting that this mournful event should not pass unnoticed by those who were bound to him in the ties of professional brotherhood, who knew him intimately, and loved him well in life, and whose early death falls with crushing weight upon so many hearts.

At the early age of twenty-eight, Richard M. Strong died, far away from home and kindred. We knew but little of his days of sickness and suffering, or of the last hours of his life, save that an unrelenting disease, in an ungenial clime, wasted him away; and in his last moments, his thoughts were turned to loved ones at home, and his lips faintly murmured a brother's name; and with this last effort of affection, his spirit passed to "God who gave it."

The story of his life is brief and simple. It is not marked by uncommon incidents, which will attract the attention of the great world. He did not live long enough to achieve the high honors of the profession to which his life was to have been devoted, and which his talents, his industry, his manly and modest deportment, his spotless character, his love of truth and justice, entitled those who knew him best to predict for his career. So much of professional life as he was permitted to pursue, gave assurance that all which would have followed, could not have

"Unbeseemed the promise of his spring."

He began the study of the law in an office with which

I was connected; and I shall always remember him with affection as a devoted, industrious, intelligent and faithful student; full of hope, and earnest in the pursuit of all that learning which marks the progress of a true lawyer, and gives dignity to a noble profession. He brought to that pursuit a mind capable of reaching a high rank among men, who never fail to appreciate learning, to reverence intellect, and to love and cherish all the higher qualities which adorn human nature. His early training, where his superiority had always been acknowledged, fitted him to commence his professional career under circumstances more favorable to success than is common to most who enter upon a pursuit where real merit is seldom unrewarded, and where few ever attain a permanent position without severe labor and solid acquirements. His practice at the bar, although not of long duration or extensive in its character, illustrated the qualities of mind and heart which commanded the respect and regard of all his brethren, and which, step by step, would have led him to high honors.

In early life he was frail and delicate, and he was nurtured with tenderest affection. At school he was patient, and diligent; and not only won the regard of his associates, but attained a position of acknowledged merit; and when his schoolboy and college days were over, he left behind him the marks of a superior mind, and the remem-

brance of an exemplary character. To this, all his early friends bear willing testimony. He sought our profession as best adapted to his tastes and talents, and entered upon it with all the enthusiasm of youth, and with all the hope and confidence which youth and conscious talents inspire. Surrounded by every comfort which wealth and affection can give, stimulated by every motive of honorable ambition, he saw the future bright before him, and, with just reliance upon himself, looked forward to a useful and an honorable career in the profession of his choice. But an imperiled country called him to other duties. He was among the first, when the sound of conflict reached us, to lay down the profession of the law, and assume the profession of arms; and he has followed it with fidelity to the same end to which we are all hastening. With the brave men who have gone to the field of strife he sought danger as a duty; and, if opportunity had presented, he would have proved himself as brave in battle as he was patient and submissive when disease wasted his life away. He was a Christian gentleman and a Christian soldier. He followed, with unfaltering trust, the path of duty to his God, to his country, to his kindred and his friends. He leaves no enemy behind him. All who knew him loved him; for his nature was gentle and genial. He was firm in honest purposes, quick to discern and defend the right, and incapable of wrong. When such men die,

early or late in life, there is a melancholy pleasure in bearing testimony to what they were; and to do so is a sacred duty to the living and the dead.

The circumstances under which our deceased brother closed his brief but honorable career, are peculiarly painful and impressive, although death now meets us in so many startling forms that we scarcely notice it until it comes very near. The stories of blood and battle, of suffering and death, are daily brought to our view, and yet scarcely arrest our attention. We look with interest to scenes of conflict and carnage, where brave men struggle and die amid the roar of cannon and the shouts of victory, but scarcely remember the unhappy patriots who, in a distant clime, struggle with relentless disease, and who, upon beds of suffering, turn once more to their early homes and kindred in all the agony of loneliness and desolation. They are far beyond all those consolations which attend the dying when surrounded by the endearments of home. Death is always a merciless visitor; but to one suffering amid strangers, in a strange land, becomes robed in his most ghastly form — terrible to the victim, and agonizing to those who are nearest and dearest to him. We cannot turn aside the veil that hides the grief of the afflicted household in which our lamented brother grew up to manhood. The father's, the mother's, the brother's and the sister's agony is all their own. We may sympathize, but can not alleviate. We may speak a word of kindness,

and drop a tear of sympathy, but we only add our sorrow to theirs. God grant that this household, and the many others that have, in these unhappy days, suffered a like bereavement, may find consolation from the only source that can give lasting comfort to the afflicted.

And let us who here grieve over the early dead, be ever mindful of the admonitions which these mournful occasions give us. Death meets us in all forms, in all conditions of age and station, and on all occasions.

> "Leaves have their time to fall,
> And flowers to wither in the north wind's breath,
> And stars to set; but *all*—
> Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh Death!"

Hon. Lyman Tremain spoke as follows:

I am well aware, Mr. Chairman, how feeble and inadequate our language is to give expression to the emotions of warm sympathy, and profound grief, which pervade the hearts of all those who had the honor to be ranked among the friends of Richard M. Strong. Knowing him well, as I did in life, I should have been lamentably deficient in sagacity and discrimination, if I had failed to discover, and to appreciate, his intrinsic merits and exalted worth. And now that he is dead; now that he has fallen in the service of his country, I should prove false to the promptings of my heart, if I remained silent on this mournful occasion.

It is natural and proper at such a time, to speak in

terms of praise of the departed. Sometimes, we know, the language employed is exaggerated or undeserved. On the present occasion, however, I speak the sentiments of all who knew our lamented professional brother, when I say, that no eulogium upon his probity, his truthfulness, his generosity, and in short, upon all those noble and manly traits of character that endear a man to his family and his friends, can be pronounced, which shall seem fulsome or overdrawn.

Mr. Strong belonged in the company of my junior professional brethren. Although I never had the pleasure of what may be called an *intimate* personal acquaintance with him, yet I knew him very well, and upon my first acquaintance with him, his bearing and deportment attracted my attention. While it was no part of his ambition to win applause by the brilliancy of his efforts, yet he always appeared to good advantage. He was entitled to, and he received, the universal respect of the Court and of his brethren at the Bar. Amiable in the highest degree, I do not believe that he had an enemy on earth. If we had been required to select by ballot, that young lawyer in the city of Albany, who combined more than any other, the virtues that make up the character of the cultivated Christian gentleman, I think I hazard little in saying that the choice would have fallen, with great unanimity, upon Richard M. Strong.

Our deceased brother was full of good humor and kind

feeling. He had a keen relish for the society of his friends, and for the social attractions by which he was surrounded. But with all this, he retained the artless simplicity of a child. His was one of those rare characters which, instead of losing the freshness of youth, or becoming contaminated as years roll on, would continue, if possible, to grow brighter, purer and nobler, with the progress of time.

The closing chapters in his young life were entirely consonant with his previous history, and precisely what we had a right to expect. What a glorious exhibition of exalted and self-denying patriotism is furnished by his conduct!

How bright is his example! Look at his career for a moment.

He had graduated at Princeton College with as complete an education as his country could furnish. He had gone through with his preparatory studies, and been admitted to the Bar. He had commenced the practice of the law under most auspicious circumstances. He was surrounded by troops of warm and devoted friends, but he felt constrained by a stern sense of duty to abandon all these precious privileges, and to respond to the call of his country. He could not remain at home, while his country was appealing to her sons to come to the rescue. He saw his beloved country struggling with a band of robbers for its life,

and like a true and faithful son, he said I am in duty bound to assist in this contest.

With a constitution that had never been hardened by exposure and toil, he did not shrink from encountering the perils of a southern climate and the dangers of the field. Volunteering with the 10th regiment, he became its adjutant, accompanied it to Louisiana, and fell, a victim to southern fever, and the exposures of camp life.

Jackson and Strong were but yesterday a promising firm of young lawyers in our city. Both were talented, cultivated and promising young men. Both have offered up their lives upon the altar of their country.

The death of Richard M. Strong is a severe loss. It is a great loss to his family, a loss to his friends, a loss to the public, and a special loss to our profession. We can illy afford to lose so bright an ornament from our number. His place cannot be supplied.

But we can, and we will, honor and cherish his memory in our inmost heart. His name will occupy one of the brightest pages in the history of those noble martyrs who have fallen in the war. We will remember him as one who was willing to devote his time, his talents, his professional prospects, and his life to the service of his country.

Let it be ours to vindicate his name and fame, respect and honor his memory, imitate his virtue, and if need be follow his example.

Mr. Rufus W. Peckham, Jr., said:

Mr. Chairman:

A noble heart has ceased to beat. Called by a summons which we shall all obey, Richard M. Strong has departed from the company of living men. I desire upon this sad occasion to pay the heartfelt tribute of a friend to the memory of him whose early death we this day mourn. Growing up with the deceased in terms of intimate friendship, I take a melancholy pleasure in bearing testimony to his many virtues. I knew him well, and his warm heart, his generous disposition, his noble character won from me, as from all who knew him, unqualified admiration and respect. Upright in all his acts, straightforward and manly in his bearing, his word when given, might be implicitly relied upon. Genial and affable in social intercourse, he was the life of that home which is now made desolate by his death.

He graduated at Princeton College, where he left a name beloved and respected by all who knew him. After leaving college, he traveled for some time in Europe, enlarging and enriching his mind from the varied stores which the cities of the old world throw open to the intelligent traveler. Returning to this city, he, in 1854, commenced the study of the law in the office of Mr. Reynolds, and upon his admission to the bar, entered upon the active practice of his profession.

During the comparatively short period of his business life among us, how much did he accomplish! By the purity of his life, his strict, unbending integrity, and the modest and uniform courtesy of his manners, he merited and received from the community where he resided, its unmingled respect and its unlimited confidence, and we who knew him well, recognized in him God's noblest work, an honest man.

Possessing a mind far above the average, aided by untiring energy and unremitting industry, there seemed nothing to obstruct him in the attainment of a high and honorable position in the ranks of his chosen profession. It seemed but natural to suppose that a bright and glorious noon would follow so promising a morning. But that noon was never reached. The angel of death called him, he obeyed the call, and he now "rests from his labors." In his death, the younger members of this bar have lost a cherished companion and a true friend, and his memory will be endeared to them by the recollection of pleasant hours passed in his company. Under these circumstances it seems appropriate to meet here and testify, by this last act of respect, how much we mourn his early decease. When the rebellion broke out he was engaged in practice with the late Col. William A. Jackson, and the firm of Jackson & Strong has been dissolved by the death of both its members in the cause of our country.

When the government first called for troops, General

Rathbone was appointed to the command of the Albany depot, and Strong, being a member of his staff, was called upon to devote his whole time and energies to the work of organizing the special department given him in charge, and he soon succeeded in establishing order and regularity therein. During this period, in his intercourse with the numerous officers congregated here, he displayed the same courtesy of demeanor, the same aptitude for business which always characterized him, and many officers will hear with pain and regret of the decease of one whom in their short intercourse with him, they had learned to admire and respect.

When the Albany depot had sent forward to the field all the troops then asked for, Strong returned to his profession, ready at a moment's notice to obey any call his country might make. When the 10th regiment was accepted, believing his duty called him to the field, he sought for and obtained the post of Adjutant, and the officers of the regiment will fully bear me out when I say, that he devoted his whole energies to its proper and speedy equipment for active service. Untiring in his efforts to promote its strength and efficiency, ever mindful of the welfare and comfort of his men, never shirking a duty, quick and ready to comprehend military matters, cool, collected and brave, he became the general favorite, and showed himself an accomplished and gallant officer.

With a growing practice, surrounded by a large circle

of relations and warm personal friends, in the possession of almost everything that renders life attractive and beautiful, he has sacrificed all for his country.

No man ever went forth with purer motives, with less of ambitious dreams animating his soul, than he who now lies dead, covered with the earth of a distant land. It was the genuine love of country which sent him to the contest. No boyish ebullition of enthusiasm governed him, no thirst for military glory prompted him, fancy held up to his imagination no gorgeous and glorious scenes to conceal the stern realities, which with the calm judgment of a man he decided to brave. No! he went forth strong in the belief of the justice of the cause, firm in his determination to do all that should become a man, and with a single reliance and pure faith in an overruling Providence he calmly committed his life to its keeping.

Thus he went forth. We all remember how a few months ago our streets echoed to the tread of armed men, and there he was among them. Death has been busy with them since. Although not as yet engaged in battle, the ranks of the 10th are thinned, and many of its members now sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

He of whom we speak, has testified his love for his country, his respect and reverence for her institutions, by offering up his own young life, a willing sacrifice for their preservation. "Greater love hath no man than this."

He has added another name bright and stainless, to the

long roll of patriot heroes and martyrs whose life blood has flowed for the cause of American unity, and his memory will live in the grateful hearts of affectionate friends.

He died not as a soldier would prefer to die, on the field of battle, amid the smoke and flashes of artillery, the shouts of contending armies and the roar of musketry, listening as death steals over him for the glorious shouts of victory. No! it was in the camp, stretched upon a bed of sickness, with burning fever upon him, far away from the land of his birth, from all the comforts and affection of a home which he ornamented and brightened, surrounded by the stern realities of war, that his manly spirit passed away, and he fell asleep under the protecting shadow of that flag which he loved so well. Calmly and peacefully, amid such scenes, he died,

> "Like one who wraps the
> Drapery of his couch around him,
> And lies down to pleasant dreams."

Early in life he received the sweet consolations of a strong religious faith. Religion covered him as with a mantle; it pervaded the entire man, ennobling and elevating his every action. Pure was he in his life; trustful, with an abiding faith, at his death; and, living and dying, he exemplified and embodied all our conceptions of a Christian gentleman.

We admired his mental qualities, we loved his generous and warm heart; and we now do reverence to the spotless purity of his private character.

In the death of such a man, we do not feel as if we had altogether lost him. His example will live, shining brightly, as time in his onward march carries us far from the scenes of to-day; and now, while listening sadly to the decree—"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, earth to earth," in the firm belief that his sleep will be calm, and his awakening glorious, we bow in humble submission before the throne of Him who doeth all things well.

Mr. Young, from the committee on resolutions, reported the following:

Another member of the Albany County Bar has died in the military service of the country. Richard Marvin Strong, a gentleman of much professional ability, of amiable manners and strict integrity, beloved by his companions in arms, and by all who were associated with him in the pursuits of civil life, in the flower of his age, has gone from among us forever. His worth as a citizen and a lawyer, his valor and patriotism, have consecrated his name and his memory in the hearts of his brothers of the Bar. In view of this mournful dispensation,

Resolved, That while contemplating with admiration and pride the example furnished by the deceased, of conscientious devotion to the Union and the supremacy of the laws, we deeply lament the too early death of one whose cultivated mind and pure character gave promise of so much usefulness and distinction. His intercourse with

his brethren of the Bar was marked, at all times, by kindness and courtesy. Among his fellow-citizens, his daily life was eminent for that uprightness and manly bearing which are the outward manifestations of a heart imbued with the principles of justice and right. His literary attainments and scholarlike tastes were the graceful and fitting ornaments of his virtues. Knowing the magnitude of the sacrifices at which he entered upon the career of arms, we venerate the heroism and constancy of one who was capable, when his country demanded his services, of exchanging the delights of a home, where he had ever been an object of the tenderest affection, the charms of study and the rewards of professional industry, for the hardships, the perils and the sufferings of the camp and the field.

Resolved, That we tender to the parents and friends of the deceased our hearfelt sympathies in the affliction which this melancholy event has brought upon them; and that we invoke in their behalf the consolations which enabled our departed brother to meet death with Christian fortitude and resignation.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the newspapers of the city, and that a copy, signed by the officers of this meeting, be presented to the family of the deceased.

Hon. Deodatus Wright said:

Mr. Chairman:

Before the vote is taken on the resolutions which have just been read, I desire to express my hearty concurrence in all that has been said by the speakers who have preceded me, and to whom we have listened with the deepest interest, while they have uttered their feeling and eloquent tributes of esteem and respect for him whose early loss we have met to deplore, and whose manly and heroic qualities we have assembled to commemorate. The deceased was one of the younger members of the junior class of our Bar. It was therefore eminently fit and proper, that the younger and middle-aged members of our profession, should first give expression to the emotions and sentiments which the occasion could not fail to inspire. But Richard M. Strong possessed qualities of too marked and manly a character, not to arrest the attention and secure the respect of all his professional brethren, without regard to class or age. In the language of one of the gentlemen who has spoken, I too can say, that I was not intimately acquainted with the deceased, and yet I knew him sufficiently well to affirm, that I entertained for him a regard as high, and an esteem as sincere, as I entertained for any professional brother between whom and myself there existed so great a disparity in years. And I can truly say, that no death which has occurred in the ranks of those who have gone forth from our own Bar, to serve their country in this try-

ing hour, has produced in my mind, emotions of deeper sadness, or more profound regret. It is therefore very gratifying to me to see so large a number of his professional brethren assembled here to-day, to honor his memory.

But a few short months have elapsed since he was engaged in a professional career, surrounded by circumstances as flattering, and prospects as bright, as those which attended any young lawyer in this city. While thus engaged, he saw his country suddenly plunged from a state of peace and prosperity, into one of the most formidable and deadly civil conflicts the world has ever witnessed. He saw that our free, glorious institutions, hitherto the pride and boast of our own land, and the hope of the lovers of freedom throughout the world, were involved in the great issue. He fully appreciated the magnitude of the contest, and knew that strong arms, and loyal hearts, could alone avert the fearful calamities which threatened his country. With these he was liberally endowed, and these he dedicated to his country's service.

A career so bright, so full of promise in its commencement, so unselfish and patriotic in its progress, has been suddenly terminated by death. Although cut down in the very morning and flower of life, just as he had entered into early manhood, we can not mourn for him as for one who has lived in vain. No man has lived a short life, who has faithfully and heroically performed all the duties which devolved on him while he lived. Measuring the

years of our deceased brother by this standard, it will be found that his span of life exceeds that of many who have lived longer, and exhibited fewer evidences of exalted manhood. This war has made sad ravages among our professional brethren. This is the third time that we have been called upon to mourn the loss of a member of our own Bar. Jackson, Hill, and Strong, all young men, all in the flush of early manhood, all occupying high social positions, and all enjoying a full measure of public esteem, have offered up their lives upon their country's altar, for their country's salvation. Many, very many others in this city, from all occupations and all pursuits, have done likewise.

Albany may well feel proud of the patriotic and heroic band of martyrs who have yielded up their lives for their country. I doubt whether any other city in the loyal States, in proportion to its population, can present a longer or brighter catalogue of brave and heroic spirits who have perished in this conflict. This war has not only brought death into many a family in this city; every city, every village, town and hamlet throughout our land, has been sadly afflicted. Indeed but few dwellings have escaped the desolation and woe which the deaths, caused by this unnatural war, have brought to almost every household.

In view of these sad bereavements, these sore afflictions, the reflection has forced itself upon my mind since I entered this hall, how important, how imperative it is, for

every man under the solemn responsibilities which he owes to his God, and to his fellow man, to be definitely, and clearly persuaded in his own mind, whether the conflict in which we are engaged is, or is not, on our part, holy and just. If it be not just, then we are bound by the most weighty and sacred obligations that can address themselves to a Christian and moral people, to use all legitimate means within our power to arrest its further progress, to put an end to this deadly, desolating strife. If, on the other hand, we agree with those who believe our quarrel just, and who, like him whom we have met to-day to honor, have given their lives in testimony of the deep sincerity of their convictions, we are under obligations equally weighty, and equally solemn, to do all within our power to bring this unnatural contest to a speedy and triumphant close.

Gen. John Meredith Read, Jr., said:

I should do great injustice to my feelings if I suffered this occasion to pass without paying my tribute to the memory of a man for whom I entertained the highest respect.

My acquaintance with Lieut. Strong was slight. But no one could meet him, even casually, without being impressed by his activity of mind, his integrity of purpose.

It was my good fortune, in an official capacity, to witness the zealous alacrity with which, at the commencement of the war, he entered upon his duties as a member of Gen.

Rathbone's staff—and I hazard nothing in saying that his energy, his perseverance, his executive ability, were felt and acknowledged by all with whom he had official relations.

The reputation which he then acquired for thorough soldierly accomplishments, has never forsaken him.

It seems but a few short months since we were assembled here to pay our last offices of affection and respect, as a profession, to the friend and partner of our lamented brother. Little did we think, when we uttered words of sorrow for the departure of William A. Jackson, that we should so soon be called to mourn the decease of Richard M. Strong. Little did we imagine that he, who was then in the full vigor of manhood, would be summoned at so early a day, to lay down his life as a sacrifice on the altar of his country.

Relinquishing the luxuries of home, the endearments of friends, our late associate went forth, in the flush of youth, with lofty purpose and Christian fortitude, to do battle in defence of our common country.

Like his comrade, he has fallen by the dread hand of disease, but with his face to the foe—and another martyr is added to the holy cause of liberty.

Mr. Orlando Meads said:

Mr. Chairman:

If I may be allowed the privilege, I would add a few words to those which have already been so well and fittingly spoken in regard to our deceased young friend. It so happened, that I saw a good deal of him at an early period of his life. During his school days at the Albany Academy, and subsequently during a part of his collegiate course at Princeton College, he was an intimate friend and companion of my own, now deceased son; and in this way, and also in the course of my duties as a trustee of the Academy, I saw much of him, and came to know him well. No boy had in a higher degree the confidence and respect both of his teachers and his companions. He was intelligent, exact and conscientious in the performance of every duty, and most amiable, unselfish and faithful in his intercourse with his friends. In a class of boys, than which a better never passed through the Albany Academy —and that I know is saying much—he was one of the best scholars. He was an accurate and thorough classical scholar; but he especially distinguished himself in mathematics, for his proficiency in which he received the Caldwell medal, given always to the best mathematical scholar.

As he was at school, so was he also at college, where he maintained the same high character he had held at the Academy. The same fine qualities marked him still, as

indeed they continued to mark him through life; the same good sense, the same high principle, the same regularity and exactness in his habits, the same kind-heartedness, steadfastness and truth.

On leaving college, he entered upon the study of the law. He brought to it a sound, well balanced and well disciplined mind, liberal attainments, good habits, and high moral qualities. With these, he could not well fail to succeed; and we can all bear witness, that no young man among us had in a higher degree the esteem and confidence both of his professional brethren and of the community in which he lived.

But the same conscientious sense of duty which had marked him from his boyhood, led him to yield himself to the call of his country in this its time of need and peril. The fact that his friend and late partner, Col. Wm. A. Jackson, had recently fallen a victim to his labors and exposures in the camp and in the field, so far from deterring him from giving himself to the same cause, seemed to him but an additional reason why he should do so. With everything to make home attractive, he did not hesitate to give himself to duties which he regarded as paramount and imperative. How well and faithfully he fulfilled his arduous duties as the Adjutant of his regiment, both here and at its southern post of duty, we all know. In this honorable and devoted course of service, far from his home and friends, he, too, has yielded up his life. But it is for

ourselves and not for him that we should mourn. His life, from the outset, has been an unbroken round of duties well performed. It may seem short, but not incomplete; for, in the words of the Book of Wisdom, "He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time." "For honorable age—says the same book—is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by the number of years; but wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age!"

The resolutions were thereupon adopted.

On motion, the following committee was appointed by the Chair to prepare and publish a memorial of the deceased: Abraham Lansing, G. L. Stedman, E. J. Miller, J. C. Cook, J. J. Olcott, A. V. DeWitt, S. Wood, R. W. Peckham, Jr., and S. Hand.

Adjourned.

Resolutions and Proceedings of Public Bodies.

At a special meeting of the trustees of the State Street Presbyterian Church of Albany, held June 3d, 1863, the following memorial was ordered to be entered upon the minutes:

"Died—May 12, 1863, at Camp Bonnet Carré, near New Orleans, of typhoid fever, Richard M. Strong, Adjutant of the 177th Regiment N. Y. S. Volunteers, in the 28th year of his age."

The Board of Trustees of the State Street Presbyterian Church, assembled in view of this sad event, desire to place upon record their heartfelt sorrow at the death of their associate.

1. Called away in the bloom of his manhood—with rare powers of mind and heart devoted to the service of his God and his country—with prospects of immediate and future honorable usefulness clustering about him—with the hopes of soldiers in the camp and friends at home centering in him—with the love of kindred and friends

clinging to him;—we can not refrain, because of the loss to ourselves and others, from mourning for him.

2. Remembering all that he was, and all that he had already done in his short life, that he was an accomplished scholar, a sound and successful lawyer, an ornament of social life, and efficient and idolized officer of his regiment, a conscientious, noble and active Christian gentleman; and especially remembering, as it becomes us to do, his prudent and efficient agency in the organization and management of this Church,—we shall cherish his memory with gratitude, pride and tender affection.

3. Remembering how in this war for our country's integrity, he was willing to sacrifice his interests at home—and with no blind and thoughtless rashness, but with calm and deliberate foresight, to put his life in peril—how earnestly he labored, in the face of every discouragement, for the organization and outfit of his regiment, how patiently and efficiently he has since devoted himself to its care and management, and how he has been rewarded with the affectionate admiration and gratitude of his soldiers,—we hesitate not to name him among the honored and lamented dead of this rebellion.

4. To his afflicted father and mother and other relatives we tender our deepest sympathy. God have mercy upon them, and comfort them in this bereavement. To them, as to us, it will be sweet—it will be a consolation to recall his noble and upright character, his countless deeds

of kindness, his patriotic sacrifice, his unspotted reputation as a citizen and a soldier, and his Christian life and death.

ROBERT L. JOHNSON, President.

JOHN C. MCCLURE, Secretary.

At a special meeting of the Alpha Sigma Society held June 3d, 1863, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, God in his infinite wisdom has taken from this world, our brother Richard M. Strong, President of this Society, and has pronounced his work finished, when to us it seemed that his career of usefulness had but just commenced; and

Whereas, This Society has lost one of its most active members, and each of us, as members, a most cherished and loving friend; therefore

Resolved, That while we deeply feel this heavy affliction, we the companions of his boyhood are rejoiced to bear witness to his consistent life, his high moral purpose, his virtue, honor and integrity; to his untiring industry, his great natural and acquired attainments; to his unwearied perseverance which overcame all obstacles, and to that nobleness of character and geniality of disposition which caused his friends to love him and all to respect him.

Resolved, That while we deplore his early death, we are thankful for the example of his life; a life filled with

the grandest purposes and animated with the highest motives; a life true to himself, his country and his God; the noble record of which, even as we but partially know it, shows that he has not lived in vain.

Resolved, That we tender to his family our most heartfelt sympathies, praying that God, in his mercy, may show them the silver lining to the dark cloud which now overshadows them, and transfer their thoughts from their loss to his everlasting gain.

ERNEST J. MILLER, Vice-President.

R. V. De Witt, Recording Secretary.

At a meeting of the Albany Zouave Cadets, held June 5th, 1863, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, We have heard, with the deepest sorrow, of the death of Adjt. R. M. Strong, of the 177th Regiment, N. Y. S. V., a member of our company, and one of our most estimable citizens; therefore,

Resolved, That while we bow submissively to the ordination of Providence, by which one of our most active and efficient members has been taken from us, we desire to bear testimony to the zeal and fidelity with which he ever discharged his duties as a member of this company.

Resolved, That, although we mourn his death with unaffected sorrow, and while we feel that the loss of one so intimately identified with us in the organization of this

Company is irreparable, still we rejoice to know that he fell at the post of duty in the cause of our beloved and suffering country; and that having thus freely yielded up his life in the bloom and strength of manhood in a cause so holy, we shall ever cherish his memory with just pride and gratification.

Resolved, That in the sacrifices he made in his relinquishment of business, and the comforts of a home in which he was beloved, and of society in which he was honored, in his willingness to accept the perils and hardships incident to the life of a soldier, he has bequeathed to us a bright example of lofty patriotism and unselfish devotion to duty.

Resolved, That to his afflicted parents, to his sorrowing friends, and to the 177th Regiment, in which he was universally beloved, we extend our warmest sympathy; and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to his parents, to his regiment, and also that they be published in the papers of this city.

A. C. JUDSON, Chairman.

D. S. Benton, Secretary.

The following Memorial was adopted at a meeting of the officers of the 177th Regiment N. Y. S. V., on the return of the regiment to Albany, September, 1863 :

The Almighty Ruler of events saw fit to call from earth our dear companion in arms, Lieutenant Richard M. Strong, Adjutant of this regiment. An all-wise Providence has given rest to the noble labors, and termination to the patriotic purposes, of one whose true hand and earnest spirit were pledged to the sacred cause of his country's integrity. Far from home, and in an unkindly clime, our brother soldier looked for the last time upon that flag in defence of which his eyes are now closed forever.

In the death of this young officer the loss to the regiment has been irreparable. Gifted with a mind of no ordinary capacity, and possessing an intellect eminently fitted both to organize and to control, Lieutenant Strong developed, in his brief military career, an aptness and talent for the profession of arms rarely surpassed by those who have spent long years in military study and service. Prompt, energetic, reliable, he performed the duties of his responsible position with an efficiency and thoroughness that were alike a cause of pride and honor to his regiment, a theme of congratulation to his friends, and a source of merited distinction to himself.

Nor was it as a tactician and disciplinarian that Lieut. Strong displayed the brightest elements of his character. The Adjutant of the 177th regiment was a firm and thoughtful believer in the precepts of Christianity. Superior to the many evil influences that beset the soldier's path, the high example of his life, sincere and devoid of ostentation, will long be remembered by the many who saw and profited by it. The soldiers of his regiment regarded him gratefully as their friend and benefactor; one who sympathized in and shared the hardships and privations of their lives, and who, through act and precept, offered the highest encouragement to a proper performance of their duties. In him the sick found a cheering friend and comforting visitor; and, kneeling by the bedside of the dying, his prayers besought the merciful grace of Him,

"Who giveth his beloved, sleep."

Courteous in manner, soldierly in bearing, gallant, educated, accomplished, Lieutenant Richard M. Strong won, unconsciously, the hearts and friendship of the officers and men who now mourn his loss. Prompted by a noble desire to serve his country in the field, he left business, friends, home, and all the dear associations amidst which his youth had been passed, and directed his energies and talents towards organizing and perfecting the regiment of which he was so bright an ornament. No labor seemed too difficult, no time inopportune, no sacrifice

too great for him, while proving his devotion to the direct course of a soldier's DUTY. It was while in the discharge of the latter that he contracted the illness that terminated only with his life. Had it been his lot to have fallen, sword in hand, upon the field of battle, he could not have lived more bravely, or died a nobler death.

In view, therefore, of all that we admiringly knew and lovingly remember of our departed friend, it is

Resolved, That in the death of Lieut. Richard M. Strong, Adjutant of the 177th Regiment N. Y. S. Volunteers, the soldiers of the regiment have lost a sincere friend, the officers a companion and comrade of surpassing worth, and our government an accomplished, brave and most valuable supporter.

Resolved, That in his decease, an officer and a gentleman,—a Christian officer and gentleman,—has laid down his life and his sword in the high-toned, unswerving, self-sacrificing discharge of duty to his God and his country.

Resolved, That we devoutly trust and believe that our departed friend was prepared, through his life and faith, to meet the great change from time to eternity; and while we sympathize with his afflicted friends, and with them mourn his absence here, we find consolation in the thought that

"Our temporal loss is his eternal gain."

Resolved, That a copy of this expression of our feeling, as individuals and as a regiment, be transmitted to the family of the deceased; and that a copy be also preserved with the archives of the 177th Regiment N. Y. S. Volunteers.

COL. IRA W. AINSWORTH, Chairman.

Capt. L. U. LENNOX, Secretary.

The Completed Christian Life.

A

SERMON

COMMEMORATIVE OF

ADJT. RICHARD M. STRONG,

177TH REGT. N. Y. S. V.

WHO DIED AT BONNET CARRÉ, LA.,

MAY 12, 1863.

PREACHED IN THE STATE STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
ALBANY, N. Y.

BY REV. A. S. TWOMBLY,

JUNE 7, 1863.

ALBANY:
J. MUNSELL, 78 STATE STREET.
1863.

SERMON.

Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy: Acts xx, 24.

There is always, in the true Christian's heart, a desire that his earthly life may continue, until its complete work be done; until the mortal stage of the soul become a finished unity.

This was Paul's idea, as given in the text. His mind had long ago passed by the bitterness of death. He was ready to be offered, when his time should come; but his whole nature, made to harmonize by long culture with the completeness of God's plans, clung to its wish for the full development of its earthly career, whether that should be accomplished by lengthening out his life in suffering, or closing it by a speedy death. Paul counted dear both life and death, only as by living or by dying, he might complete his earthly course with joy.

Thus did his exquisite appreciation of God's providential order, blend with a Christian willingness to live or die at God's command.

And my Christian friends, there can be no truer standard than this, by which to regulate our wishes in regard to the duration of our own mortal life, and the life of those we love.

When the true cycle of mortality is complete in all its parts; when there has come the rounding out of the career on earth, then with the Apostle, we ought not to be surprised or disappointed, if death takes us or our friends, to a new sphere. Life would gain nothing by delay. Death can deprive of nothing to be won. The perfect operation of the soul upon the world, and of the world upon the soul, has been accomplished, and there would be but a disturbance of the balanced forces, were another period added to the appointed time.

I. Nothing that exists is left to chance for the duration of its life, or for the length of any *period* of its life. As one has said, all periods of this description belong to the certainties of nature, but also, at the same time, to the mysteries of Providence.

This is not Fate. It is God's wonderful adaptation

of all beings and all things to His own purpose; it is Omnipotence controlling circumstances after His own wise choice. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without His preordaining power. No human being sinks into the grave, without His sovereign decree. All lives, therefore, however shortened or prolonged, come into harmony with the secret proportions of a heavenly scale, by virtue of connection with the hidden movements of the purposes of God.

How to obtain a knowledge of this fixed duration of our mortal life, we know not. Much relating to this subject seems precarious, and even in opposition to the theory of distinct and perfect unity in every period of life; but "mysterious indeed, and uncertain, as regards our knowledge, it is fixed and rigorous certain in the secret counsels of Jehovah."

Death comes to one before the years begin to fill. The flush young hope, just springing into joyous exercise, is thrust down into darkness of the grave. Like buds before they open, before their fragrance is exhaled upon a single breeze, lives are snapped off and wither into dust. Those who promise best, often go most quickly.

The man who holds the most important threads of

other lives—from whom go out in every direction invisible threads, connecting countless agencies, to his one toiling hand or working brain—seems sometimes sought for first by the destroyer; and the threads loosened from his grasp can not apparently be gathered up by any other. No clue remains, by which another mind can follow out his subtle trains of thought, or finish the important measures he has undertaken; and yet he is cut off! The fingers that were tightened on the world, its interests, its prospects and its welfare, are relaxed forever; and that separate life, on which so many others seemed to hang, is gone! Yet for all that, God to be true unto Himself, must have implanted in that life the secret of its independent duration; and God must also have made its period commensurate with all the parts which it was fitted and intended to sustain in the great scheme of universal life. For since Jehovah can not set the bounds of man's probationary existence from caprice, these bounds must be determined in a way to make each mortal period an organic whole; complete as such, within itself, and in its relations to all other modes of being.

II. But secondly, we do not modify this general assertion, as we find introduced into the Christian's

earthly stage, elements which make it, in a far higher sense, a finished whole.

Whether the true Christian lives a single hour or a hundred years after his conversion, his life fills out its perfect cycle in the truest of all senses. The child of scarce unfolded piety, and the veteran Christian, alike yield up to God in death a mortality mysteriously compact; the work both had to do on earth being as completely done, as if each had been assigned the longest period known to man.

For each regenerated life represents the same essential principle; each displays the same work of God's spirit; each contains the germ of holiness, the seeds of everlasting life, which can in any case be brought to perfect fruit only by translation to the higher sphere. There must be in God's mind some fixed proportion between the influence which a Christian soul shall have on earth and the duration of its earthly life. But even this is not apportioned according to our knowledge; for we do not know but that some child may leave a power for good behind it on the earth, which will outvie the works of the most aged Christian. God's measuring out of life unto his chosen, rests on the ground of a most comprehensive plan, in which each separate existence has a whole, distinct and per-

fect place; the length of its duration not necessarily determining its relative importance in the infinitely varied plan. We know that some long lives seem less productive than some briefer ones. Then why may not the very briefest, in God's hand, be of the highest value? But setting aside what it accomplishes, and without regard to the length of its duration, we know each Christian's life is always a completed life, in the only sense that it can be finished in this probationary state; because in it has taken place that reconciliation of corrupt humanity with God, and that regeneration or renewal of the nature, for which alone existence has been given to man since Adam fell.

Not that the process of a perfect sanctification is effected; it never is, in any soul upon the earth. It is not in accordance with our observation, that a soul shall be perfected in this sense upon the earth; and it is a secondary matter whether more or less achievement lingers after a man, and bears his name; but in this *harmony*, now instituted between his free-acting soul and God, there is virtually accomplished the one thing, for which Jehovah has allowed our race to live.

The probationary stage of any one, in whom this act of reconciliation has not been accomplished, is in this higher sense unfinished, since the design of a

probation has not been met in his career; but if we are saved by Faith in Christ alone, then, from the moment of our reconciliation, the perfected act of a change of heart is accomplished, and the soul made ready for the new career above.

This is the *only completed* process through which the soul can pass on earth. Intellectual perfection certainly is not found here; and we have seen already, that although sanctification is commenced in this life after the soul's conversion, yet it is never ended; for however great a soul's attainments, it must meet at death perfecting agencies, before it can be ushered into heavenly purity and bliss.

III. Yet thirdly, there is a sense in which some Christian lives seem providentially more complete than others; when, for example, circumstances give symmetry to the outward expression of the inward change; or when, in its development, the Christian character appears in large degree complete.

Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, is said to have been "made perfect through suffering;" as if his life gained outward unity by the trials it passed through.

And, in like manner, Paul speaks of giving up his life, if by this means his course could be made the more complete.

In some lives, then, there are more perfect indications of the completed inward act; and in *this* sense one life may seem to us more finished than another, in the righteousness of Christ. As a man exhibits more or less of finish in his conduct—in his actual renunciation of the world, and in his willingness to count all things but loss for God and duty—so must we look on him with more or less assurance, that there is in him the perfect work of God's regenerating grace.

Paul's affirmation, and the way he acted on it, leave no doubt that his course was a finished one.

We must then, in all cases look to the record which a Christian leaves behind him, if in the higher sense, we are to judge his earthly life a finished whole. If, in his course on earth, these evidences appear, then whether long or short his life; cut off before maturity of years, or after a long life of service, we have no right to say he came to an untimely end.

God's time in taking every Christian home, is the full harvest time in that soul's earthly course. As the sickle to a shock of corn in ripeness, so does death come to Christians, whether young or old, whose lives are given to God.

Nor need we question probabilities with shrewd analysis, when we would be assured that a departed

spirit has finished in this higher sense its probationary course; for the Christian of perfected earthly life, however he may doubt his own acceptance, seldom leaves a doubtful record with the friends who weep his death.

The light of one, in whom a pure and undefiled religion is implanted, is seldom hidden from the world. The humblest of all Christians can not keep the world from seeing his humility; and even where the spark of Christian faith is dim, if it be there at all, the world's sharp eye will catch its gleam. So intricate are human friendship and associations; and so surely does each man touch other men, in all the real and vital qualities of being, that seldom is a Christian undiscerned.

Just as high nobleness of character will show itself, in spite of that reserve by which true greatness loves to cover up its deeds, so will affinity for God and truth give an inevitable attestation to its own existence. Where friends are doubtful in the matter, although their affection takes the benefit of the doubt, and still hopes on, the probability is, that the higher work of life was left undone.

But setting these comparisons aside, how glad a thing it is to turn to such a record as is now before

us, whereon God's providential hand has written the assurance of a life complete in all the parts relating to this earthly stage. How it brings smiles of hope, through tears of grief, to speak of a departed soul whose earthly life is finished in the Lord, and of whose preparation for a higher sphere abundant proofs remain! Not that we look for, or hope to find perfection of desires or deeds in any mortal life. Not that the memory detects no blemish, or that loving eulogy finds nothing it would fain conceal. Surely every man might do more, suffer more for Christ, than any one has ever done or suffered! but justly recognizing all defects; without attempting to delineate a perfect character, such record puts at least true marks of Heaven upon the soul, and bears it upward in triumphal joy to God. For in all qualities that mark the Christian—in the strong traits by which God's grace makes evident the beginning of the sanctifying process—such a record is complete.

The *man*, the *Christian*, the friend of Jesus stands before us, as we view his life; his manhood and his faith prevailing in the picture, over all the imperfections that would bring him to the level of unchristian men. And seldom do we turn, my friends, to a more sure and satisfactory record of a finished earthly

course than that to which the sad events of the last month direct our thoughts.

As you have listened to this sermon, I am sure that none of you have failed to trace an illustration of its truth, in the career of one whose long continued absence, and whose recent death, create such tearful interest to-day, in every word or thought concerning him.

In the prime of manhood, God has taken him away. With many earthly hopes yet unfulfilled—a thousand manly aspirations all unmet—just as the promise of his early culture ripens towards its fruit—before life gives its best rewards—he dies! But who will say that life in him, in any sense, was incomplete? Who will say that death has broken from the stem, a life whose summer time had not yet come? This church, which owes much of its strength and its success, to him whose name alone is left to it, may seem all incomplete without him. We, his associates and friends, among whom he appeared pre-eminent for genial goodness, strength of judgment, and simplicity of character, may be obliged to leave unfinished, his share in the work which we together had assumed. The sabbath school — his pride and care — that class which he took with him to the war,

may never find a substitute for the place he occupied. And in the private circle of his dearest friends, the years he would have filled with happiness for them, may seem all incomplete and vacant; even as to all whose lives and interests his peculiar qualities seemed to supply that which *he* only could supply, his career may seem but the fragment of an earthly course. And why God called this useful servant home so soon, why all this ripening power for good should be so soon dissolved in death, we can not tell; but this one thing we know, in him, when God's eye searched, it found the full condition of a finished mortal life!

The earthly dates that limit his career between the times of birth and death, are not God's boundaries, and the meanness of our human computations, God makes manifest, in giving a far grander finish than that of years or circumstances, to his life.

For although on all life's ordinary relationships his memory sheds a fragrant beauty, yet our thoughts invest him with far richer usefulness, and his name will have far greater eloquence for good, because Religion lent her lustre to the fair graces which adorned his life. That his life was rich in things that win the hearts of friends and touch the finer springs of

feeling, none who witness the universal lamentation at his death can doubt.

The touching reminiscences preserved of him at home; the lonesome feeling there without him; together with the last word on his dying lips (his brother's name), tell well enough of him as son and brother. While for that trying relationship, existing so seldom in perfection between a young church member and his careless friends, let those to whom his presence was an admonition, and at the same time a delight, bear witness. Let the power of his life and death on them, attest his genial, unobtrusive but consistent character as a friend.

So too, the record of his business life, for thoroughness, fairness and ability, may challenge scrutiny. This, the resolutions published by his associates of the Bar, full well attest. And let our own church records show the value of his professional advice. Let this goodly edifice in which to-night we worship, speak, not only from the accuracy of all its financial formulæ, of his legal skill, but also from its chaste adornments, of his care and taste; thus proving that while apt and able in professional acquirements, he was likewise talented and tasteful in all other branches of a liberal culture.

But above all signs like these, who to his record *as a Christian* would wish to add more signs of full-orbed life? who most anxious for assurance, could desire more signs of faith, humility and sacrifice by which the Christian's earthly state is made complete? Not that all possible signs appear in him; but that enough appear, to show that by God's grace the germ of true Christianity was in his soul, who that has heard him pray, who that has watched his manly, Christian life; who that has heard of his pure motives in responding to his country's call, can for a moment doubt? Are not these outward indications of completeness, clustered over and about his memory like flowers that tell of a prolific soil? And were all other indications wanting, would not the last great witness of his life; would not the counting of his life a willing offering, be sufficient testimony to the full completion of this trial-epoch of his soul?

His fellow soldiers send back loving messages of his devotion to the sick and suffering in that dreary hospital beneath the southern palm, thus telling us where the seeds of his own fatal malady were sown. They tell us how he sympathized with others in their sorrow; how in camp he talked and prayed with men (some of them from his old Sabbath class), when to indite a

prayer or sing a psalm, cost something more than time or talent.* They tell us that the "Cross at any time in his deportment could be seen;" so that we needed not to hear the tidings of his death, to know assuredly that life was not accounted dear to him, if that he might complete his course with joy. If therefore in addition to the Christian impulse by which he was hurried to the field; if anything above that sense of Christian duty, for which he gave our land his life, were wanting to attest the fullness and completeness of his earthly course, these last days with the sick and the disabled—his last words, all of which were breathed, not for himself but for another, would announce with unmistakable authority how truly he had counted all things loss, that he might win the crown.

When we think of him, let not our eyes be dim with tears—but let our hearts rejoice that God has

* A touching incident occurred to-day, in connection with this class. A pupil who had volunteered for two years in another regiment, being at home on a short furlough, entered the school and asked the Superintendent for his former teacher, not knowing that the class had all enlisted, and that their teacher was no more. What could more forcibly illustrate our beloved brother's influence and power as a faithful teacher in the Sabbath School?

made him able, thus to finish his career with joy. Let his memory seem to us, like some perfected crystal formed from the agitated cooling of the ore; each side reflects its own peculiar lustre, while together all the rays perfect a starlike form, whose gleams conceal all imperfections; and within whose heart a crystal germ of purity waits but the master-hand to be made fit for coronets of kings.

But yesterday our friend was like ourselves, imperfect, frail and liable to temptation; upon his life the finishing touch had not yet come. To-day, by Jesus's handling, he is shining in perfection in the diadem of God! His mortal life was gladly given for this end; then why should we begrudge it! Everything was laid for this at Jesus's feet; and why should we be sorry for the sacrifice! A joyous home, great hopes, strong friendships, happy ties,—all counted loss, so that he might end his course with joy! These are the signs of its completion, what can we ask for more!

Not merely do the tears of all true patriots fall upon his tomb; not only does a star-lit and perfected manhood shine from heaven upon us, to inspire with hope; but as a spirit, leaving in its flight sure signs of its redemption, his memory sheds a glad assurance down. With Paul, his strength on earth through

Christ, was in the words, "I count not *life* dear unto me, so that I finish my career with joy," and with the Apostle, he has proved those words sincere; therefore to-day with all the ransomed hosts above, he finds ecstatic pleasure in that Song of Songs, "The Lamb was slain."

My fellow Christians of this church, he for whose loss these tears of mingled grief and joy are falling, was, as you know, one of the first enrolled among our members. He is among the first to leave this membership for the Church Triumphant in the skies. He who greeted me so cordially, one year ago when first I came to live among you as your pastor, will extend to me and you no further proofs of his affection: he can offer now no further acts of love; but may he not still live about us, radiant upon us from that upper sphere? May not his death be like a cheerful light upon our way, revealing to us what the Christian has to suffer and to dare, and showing us the glorious crown he hopes to wear? May not this early gift of life to God, nerve us as worthily to finish our career? Assisted by him, to look beyond him to a greater sufferer, may we not in holy emulation, also strive to leave behind us equal proof that Jesus will present our souls upon His bleeding heart, before the throne? Then

shall the name of him who has departed become a sacred memory within our souls: our loved and honored dead will touch us from the past, and fill us with an ever-present and inspiring joy! He was ours once, in full companionship, he may be ours forever more, in that far higher intimacy which death and a divine communion can establish between kindred souls. Although his worthiness makes our immediate loss the heavier, yet for this very reason, is his gain and ours the greater! He has finished his career with joy — we in that completion may find all we need; may find the very impulse that we lacked, for giving up our life in true surrender unto God. Draw near then ye that mourn and be ye comforted. We have no cause for grief — and surely he whose requiem we chant needs not our tears!

In that resplendent lustre of perfected Souls, the spirits of the just made perfect seem to listen as I speak! I seem to speak of one among them, as if he heard me still! His voice comes gently, like an echo from the skies, entreating us to get our lives in readiness to come. He tells us of the rest above; he chants the glory of his now perfected life!

Thus would he hush our murmurs, quiet all our fears, and draw us sweetly to the love of Him, whose

life was freely given, that whosoever loseth life for His sake on the earth, may find it unto everlasting joy.

The following hymn (a favorite with Adjt. Strong, among the songs of the Sabbath School), was sung by request on the evening of the delivery of this discourse:

Come sing to me of heaven
When I'm about to die;
Sing songs of holy ecstasy
To waft my soul on high.

When cold and sluggish drops
Roll off my marble brow,
Break forth in songs of joyfulness,
Let heaven begin below.

When the last moments come
Oh, watch my dying face
To catch the bright seraphic glow
Which in each feature plays.

Then to my raptured ear
Let one sweet song be given;
Let music charm me last on earth
And greet me first in heaven.

Then close my sightless eyes
And lay me down to rest,
And clasp my cold and icy hands
Upon my lifeless breast.

When round my senseless clay
Assemble those I love —
Then sing of heaven, delightful heaven,
My glorious home above.

Also the grand and appropriate hymn :

"Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy loved employ :
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy."

The voice at midnight came;
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame,
He fell — but felt no fear.

His spirit with a bound,
Left its encumbering clay;
His tent, at sunrise, on the ground,
A darkened ruin lay.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease;
And, life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ,
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in the Saviour's joy.

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